

LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH

24 November 1980

THE INTELLIGENCE W MOLE-HUNTS IN W

By ROBERT MOSS

IN anticipation of a major counter-intelligence drive after the inauguration of President-elect Reagan on Jan. 20, the Soviet KGB is said to be reorganising its agent networks in the United States.

According to intelligence sources in Washington, KGB case officers working under diplomatic cover have been ordered to transfer their most important agents (wherever possible) to the supervision of Soviet illegals in other words, spies who operate under false identities.

Significantly, the KGB contact for Mr. David Barnett, the former CIA officer who was exposed and convicted of espionage last month, operated from the Soviet Embassy in Washington. He was Mr. Vladimir V. Popov, a KGB spy who was listed as a Third Secretary.

However, it is also believed that the chiefs of the KGB's Second Service (of the First Chief Directorate), responsible for top-level agent recruitments in the West, are reconciled to the probable exposure of some of their American sources, and have adopted a policy of damage limitation involving the deliberate exposure of low-level or "burned-out" moles in the effort to protect more highly placed operatives.

The KGB uses the term Agent-Bolvan, or "dummy agent," to describe a mole who is sacrificed in this way; the technique is faithfully described in Graham Greene's novel "The Human Factor."

Security breaches

Meanwhile, I have obtained details of several hitherto-unreported cases of probable security breaches (not all of them technically illegal) that are likely to exercise counter-intelligence investigators.

Senior staff members of the National Security Council (NSC) are said to have maintained secret contacts with high-ranking officers of the Cuban Secret Service, the Direction General de Inteligencia (DGI).

Although their meetings were

fused to allow the CIA to mount surveillance of their Cuban contacts during an important exchange in Mexico City in Oct. 1978.

The DGI officers involved in the dialogue were Sr. Jose-Luis Padron, who has been given the cover-job of Minister for Tourism, and Sr. Antonio Laguardia.

A group of radical lawyers employed by the Justice Department are said to have used their influence to quash an attempt to indict the CIA defector, Mr. Philip Agee, under the laws protecting communications intelligence, and to have leaked details of the prosecution case to Mr. Agee's legal counsel.

Suspicious cases

Within the CIA some major house-cleaning is now expected. Former counter-intelligence experts mention two cases dating back to 1976 that gave rise to serious suspicions but were never fully investigated.

A memorandum prepared, against precedent (and over the objections of some senior CIA officials) on a liaison meeting with Allied West European secret services, supposedly for the personal use of the CIA director, disappeared and this generated fears that Allied secrets had been compromised.

In the second case, a CIA officer who volunteered to inspect agent networks in West Germany requested two weeks' holiday immediately before, and one week immediately after, refusing to provide contact numbers for these periods of absence.

The same officer had previously been closely involved in the case of the Soviet defector, Artamonov, alias "Shadrin," who was kidnapped by the KGB from Vienna in 1975 while travelling on a double agent operation for the CIA. There has been continued speculation that "Shadrin" was betrayed by a Soviet source inside the CIA.

American media

Yet another area of concern is the nature of the relation

the Am Congress

Sr Ramon identified

heads the C

Section at the Czech Embassy in Washington has had notable success in this sphere.

Espionage in the United States overlaps with the illegal drug traffic, since drug-smuggling

is known to provide a major source of operational funds for the DGI. The Carter Administration has been notably lax in policing the narcotics business, especially when its political interests have been involved.

Sources connected with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) say that there has been a sustained effort to avoid exposing Panama's role as a middleman in the flow of drugs originating in Colombia, because of concern for the survival of the controversial Panama Canal Treaty.

A nephew of the Panamanian strongman, Sr. Omar Torrijos, is said to have been released on orders from Washington after being stopped at Los Angeles airport and found to be in possession of cocaine.

These sources also maintain there is a need to re-establish the so-called Deacon (DEA Clandestine Operations Network) office to tackle the Cuban factor and to overcome the high risk of official corruption in drug investigations.

FBI demoralised

A major difficulty for the Reagan Administration in addressing itself to these matters will be the demoralisation in recent years of the FBI, which has primary responsibility for internal security.

The conviction of two former top FBI officials on Nov. 6 on charges of "conspiring to violate the constitutional rights of American citizens" through the methods used to pursue terrorist bombers in 1972-73 was a powerful disincentive to an aggressive counter-intelligence approach. The ex-FBI agents are Mr. W. Mark Felt, former Associate Director, and Mr. Edward

would do well to set the mood for the new administration by issuing a Presidential pardon.

Agee and

Angola

THE Reagan dispensation may bring lean times for the circle of radical supporters of the CIA defector, Mr. Philip Agee (deported from Britain and other European countries as a security risk) who have dedicated themselves, in recent years, to the exposure of Western intelligence agents and operations.

There is a Bill before Congress that would make it a crime to expose American intelligence personnel; and it now seems certain to be voted into law.

At the same time, the effort to encourage "whistle-blowers" inside the new administration who may be politically hostile to Mr. Reagan, to leak official secrets will be intense, and could even help to spawn a new generation of Daniel Ellsbergs and Philip Agees.

One of Mr. Agee's foremost supporters also occupies a strategic place on Capitol Hill. Mr. Steven Weissman, who co-authored anti-CIA material with Mr. Agee in Britain, now figures as a key adviser to Representative Steven Solarz (Democrat-Brooklyn), who will remain Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa.

Agents named

In articles in CAMBIO 16 and LA REPUBLICA, Mr. Weissman named lists of alleged CIA operatives. He did the same job on the CIA in Britain in an article in TIME OUT magazine.

Mr. Solarz has been a leading campaigner against King Hassan of Morocco, who has helped to defend Western interests as far afield as Zaire. Mr. Weissman accompanied Congressman Solarz